

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Applicants have rewritten Claims 5, 6, and 8 in independent form. Accordingly, support for amended Claims 5, 6, and 8 can be found in the same claims, as previously presented, and in Claim 2, as previously presented filed. In addition, Claims 17-19 have been amended to properly depend from Claims 5, 6, and 8, respectively. Support for amended Claims 17-19 can be found in Claim 10, as originally filed.

No new matter has been added. Claims 5, 6, 8, 11-13, and 17-19 are active in this application.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Feely for indicating that Claims 11-13 are allowed and that Claims 5, 6, 17, and 18 are only objected to as being dependent from a rejected base claim and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants submit that, in view of the present amendments, all of the pending claims are allowable.

The rejection of Claims 2-4, 10, and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Published U.S. Patent Application No. US 2002/0021393 (Ochiai et al.) and the rejection of Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Ochiai et al. have been obviated by appropriate amendment. As the Examiner will note, Claims 2-4, 9, 10, and 14-16 have been canceled.

The rejection of Claims 8 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, has also been obviated by appropriate amendment. As the Examiner will note, Claims 8 and 19 have been amended such that they are free of the criticisms outlined on page 3 of the Office Action. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

The objection to Claim 14 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c) has been obviated by the cancellation of this claim.

Application No. 10/668,361

Reply to Office Action dated October 30, 2006

Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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